



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

### **TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH**

**March 8, 2013**

*Jewel Mullen MD, MPH, MPA, Commissioner, (860) 509-7101*

### **House Bill 5740 - An Act Concerning Uniform Standards And The Provision Of Mental Health Services At School-Based Health Centers**

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The Department of Public Health (DPH) appreciates the opportunity to provide the following information for the committee's consideration.

House Bill 5740 would amend chapter 368a of the general statutes to provide uniform standards for school-based health centers that include the provision of mental health services and require the school nurse to work collaboratively as part of the school-based health center. Currently, DPH licenses school based health centers as outpatient clinics. In accordance with Connecticut Public Health Code section 19-13-D45, an outpatient clinic provides ambulatory medical and/or dental care; however, these regulations do not permit the provision of mental health services within that licensed setting. While DPH licenses facilities that provide psychiatric outpatient services to adults (Psychiatric Outpatient Clinics for Adults 19a-495-550), the Department of Children and Families (DCF) licenses mental health services for children.

If the DPH outpatient clinic license were to be expanded to include the provision of mental health services, this would require the creation and promulgation of regulations. Additionally, this could potentially result in a significant growth in the number of DPH-licensed outpatient clinics, resulting in an increase of inspection activities. Training for DPH staff would also need consideration as the DCF has been the subject matter expert in the provision of mental health services for children. For these reasons, there would be a significant fiscal impact to DPH if the outpatient clinic license was expanded in such a way.

Thank you for your consideration of the Department's views on this bill.

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